

CHAPTER 10

AN ACCOUNT OF GOD'S GLORY

In the last chapter Krishn revealed the mysterious and definitely propitious knowledge that is the monarch of all knowledge. In Chapter 10, he again takes up the subject and asks Arjun to listen to him carefully. But what is the need of repeating something that has already been elucidated? The seeker is in fact imperfect right till the moment of attainment. The fabric of nature wears thinner as he is more and more absorbed in his contemplation of God, and fresh visions appear before him one after the other. This is made possible through a sage's -an accomplished teacher's guidance. He does not and cannot know them by himself. In the absence of such a direction the worshipper will be deprived of the attainment of God. So long as he is even slightly removed from his ultimate goal, it is evident that a crust of nature still endures and there is an apprehension of his slipping and stumbling. Arjun is a disciple who has come under Krishn's shelter. He has begged the Yogeshwar to support him as he is his pupil who depends on him. So, for the sake of this earnest and submissive disciple Krishn speaks again on what he has already discoursed on in Chapter 9.

- I. 'The Lord said, 'Listen again, O the mighty-armed, to the mystic and compelling words I am about to speak because of my concern for the good of a beloved pupil.'"**

श्रीभगवानुवाचः भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥१॥

2. “Neither gods nor great sages know my origin, for I am the primal Source from which all of them have arisen.”

Krishn also declared earlier that since his origin and action are both celestial, they cannot be seen by physical eyes. So his manifestation goes unnoticed even by men who have reached the spiritual level of gods and sages. On the other hand, however,-

3. “The wise man among mortals, who knows my reality as the birthless, eternal, and supreme God of the entire world, is freed from all sins.”

The man who knows this is a man of true wisdom. In other words, a clear awareness of the omnipresent, eternal God is the knowledge that liberates one from sin and rebirth. This achievement too is a gift from Krishn:

4-5. “All the manifold qualities with which beings are endowed: will, knowledge, freedom from delusion, forgiveness, truth, restraint of Senses and mind, happiness and unhappiness, creation and destruction, fear and fearlessness, as well as abstinence from the desire to harm, equanimity of mind, contentment, penance, charity, fame, and ignominy-are provided by none but me.”

Firmness of purpose, knowledge, dedication to the goal, suppression of the mind and senses, inner happiness, the pains of the spiritual way, awakening of God within the Self, total dissolution at the moment of realization, fear of the disciplining power of God, fearlessness of nature, conduct that does not degrade, equanimity in which there are no conflicts, contentment, penance in keeping

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।
अहमर्दिहि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥२॥
यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।
असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥३॥
बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसम्मोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयतेम च ॥४॥
अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥५॥

with the needs of the goal, self-abnegation, and putting up equally with both honour and humiliation on God's way—all these propensities are of Krishn's making. These are the qualities that characterize the way of divine contemplation. In their absence there remains only the ill-gotten hoard of devilish instincts.

6. **“The seven great sages,¹ the four who had been earlier than them, as well as Manu and others from whom all mankind has sprung, have all been shaped by the operation of my will.”**

The seven great sages or rather the seven successive stages of yog-virtuous aspiration, discrimination, refinement of spirit, inclination to truth, disinterestedness, advancement on the spiritual path towards union with God and along with them the moulding of the four faculties of mind, intellect, thought and ego in accordance with the demands of yog, are all creations of Krishn's will. That is to say that they all arise from the determination to realize him. Each of them complements the other. All these components of the treasure of divinity are Krishn's works. This treasure is dependent on the evolution of the seven steps of yog and without them it cannot be.

7. **“The one who knows the reality of my exalted magnificence and the might of my yog doubtless partakes of my nature by becoming one with me through meditation.”**

The man who learns of the excellence of yog and the glories of Krishn by direct perception is united with him and abides in him. There is not even the least doubt about this. The steady, untrembling flame of a lamp where there is no wind is an apt illustration of the subdued mind of a yogi. “Avikampen” in the verse refers to such an analogy.

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वै चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।

मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥६॥

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥७॥

1. The saints who are believed to be the seven stars of the constellation named Ursa Major denote the seven steps of yog.

8. **“Aware of the reality that I am the source of all creation as also the motive that stirs it to effort, and possessed of faith and devotion, wise men remember and worship only me.”**

It is at Krishn's behest that the entire world is spurred to action. This implies that he is also the doer of whatever yogi do in keeping with his nature. All the yogi's endeavours are thus only blessings from him. How it is so has been illuminated earlier. And now Krishn dwells upon how yogi constantly adore him.

9. **“They who anchor their minds on me, sacrifice their breath to me, and are contented with speaking only of my greatness among themselves, always dwell in me.”**

Men who devote their minds to Krishn alone without thinking of anything other than him and who dedicate themselves to him heart and soul are always conscious of his ways. They are happy singing hymns of praise of his glories and always abide in him.

10. **“I bestow upon the devotees, who always remember me and adore me with love, that discipline of yog by learning which they attain to none but me.”**

So the awakening of yog in worshippers is also a gift from God; it depends upon his assuming the role of a charioteer. The following verse points to the way by which a sage and noble teacher like Krishn blesses his devotee with the knowledge that initiates him into yog.

11. **“To extend my grace to them, I dwell in their innermost being and dispel the gloom of ignorance by the radiance of knowledge.”**

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥८॥
मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोध्यन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥९॥
तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥१०॥
तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥११॥

Krishn stands inseparably by the worshipper's Self as a charioteer to destroy spiritual ignorance. Worship does not really commence until, through a sage who has known God, the Supreme Spirit himself has not come awake in the worshipper's Soul and taken upon himself the task of guidance from one instant to another as also of restraining and disciplining him, and escorting him safely across the incongruities of nature. At this stage God begins to command from all sides. But at the beginning, it is through an accomplished sage that he speaks. If a seeker is not fortunate enough to have such a sage as a teacher, God's voice is only faintly audible to him.

The charioteer, whether he is the worshipped deity or a teacher-preceptor, or God himself, is the same. When the charioteer has awakened in the worshipper's Self, his dictates are received in four ways. At first there is the experience that is related to gross breath: of the infusion into it of a thought that was earlier not in it. When a worshipper sits in meditation, he is confronted with a number of questions. When is his mind going to be truly absorbed? To what extent is it already absorbed? When does his mind desire to escape from nature and when has it strayed from the path? The answers to these questions are signalled every moment by the adored God through physical reflexes. Twitching of limbs is an experience related to gross breath and it appears simultaneously at more than one point even within a moment. If the mind has deviated, these signals are transmitted minute after minute. But these signals are received only if the devotee holds on to the form of the worshipped Godlike teacher with undeviating firmness. Reflex actions such as twitching of limbs are a much too frequent experience of ordinary beings because of the clash between their contradictory impulses, but these have nothing to do whatsoever with the signs that are transmitted to worshippers who are wholly dedicated to the sublime object of their worship.

The other experience is connected with the awakening of breath in dreams. Ordinary men dream according to their desires, but when a worshipper cleaves to God even dreams are transformed into divine instructions. Rather than dreaming, yogi perceive the act of becoming.

These two experiences are both preliminary. Association with a sage who has known reality, having faith in him, and rendering him even a token service suffice to bring about these experiences. But the two subsequent experiences of a worshipper are more subtle and dynamic, and they can be had only through active practice—only by really walking along the path.

The third experience is that of awakening into profound sleep. All of us in the world after all, as it were, lie immersed in slumber. We are but lying in a state of insensibility in the dark night of ignorance. And whatever we do, day and night, is but a dream. Profound sleep here refers to the condition that follows after the stage when the memory of God flows through the worshipper so very like a perennial stream that his vision of God is permanently fixed in the mind. This is that serene and blessed mood in which the worshipper is led gently on by his affections, and in which, while the physical breath is suspended and he is laid asleep in body, he becomes “a Living Soul.” This is the state of harmony and of deep joy in which the worshipper is blessed with an insight into the very life of things. In such a condition the worshipped God transmits yet another signal, which manifests itself in the form of an image that is in consonance with the yogi’s prevailing mood and provides the correct direction, thus acquainting him with the past and the present. My revered teacher would quite often tell us that even like the surgeon who first renders a patient unconscious and then cures him by the application of a suitable remedy, God—when the flame of worship is strong and steady—imbues the devotee with awareness of the state of his faith and worship to cure his spiritual sickness.

The fourth and final experience is of the spiritual awakening that leads to evenness of breath. This is the state in which the worshipper is on par with that God whose thought he has fixed his mind on as on a tangible object. This realization arises from within the Self and once this awakening has taken place, at every moment while sitting idly or up and active, the worshipper pre-visions occurrences that shall be and thus gains omniscience. This is the state, too, in which there arises a sense of oneness with the embodied Self. This final experience is generated when the darkness

of ignorance is dissipated by the light of knowledge through the agency of a timeless and unmanifest sage who has awakened in his Soul.

Arjun then speaks to Krishn.

12-13. “Arjun said, ‘It has been so said by even divine sages² such as Narad, Asit, the sage Deval, and the great saint Vyas³ - that you are the radiant Being, supreme goal, and absolutely unblemished, because all of them believe you to be the Supreme Spirit who is the primeval, birthless, and all-pervasive God of all gods; and now you tell me the same.’”

“Radiant Being” and “birthless” are synonyms for God and the final state of perfect bliss. Arjun first refers to sages of the past who said the same. And now even divine sages like Narad, Asit, Deval, Vyas, and Krishn himself say it. The latter are all contemporaries of Arjun and he has the advantage of associating with these sages. And they all as well as Krishn affirm what was declared by the sages of yore. So-

14. “I believe, O Keshav, all that you have told me and which, O Lord, is known to neither demons nor gods, to be true.”

And-

15. “Which, O Supreme Lord, O Creator and God of all beings, O God of gods and master of the world, is known to you alone.”

अर्जुन उवाचः

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥१२॥
आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिनरिदस्तथा ।
असितो देवालो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥१३॥
सर्वमेतद्गुतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।
न हि ते भगवन्व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥१४॥
स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।
भूतभवान् भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥१५॥

2. Deified saints such as Atri, Bhrgu, Pulastya, and Angiras.

3. One of the chiranjivis or deathless sages. He is believed to be the compiler of the Ved in its present form as also the author of Mahabharat, the eighteen Puran, the Brahm Sutr, and several other works.

This truth which is known to Krishn, the creator of all beings and their God, is also made known to those Souls who are awakened and lit up by their consciousness of him. So the knowledge of worshippers is really his knowledge.

16. “So you alone are capable of enlightening me well on your glories by which you pervade and dwell in all the worlds.”

Therefore-

17. “How should I, O Yogeshwar, know you by incessant contemplation and in what forms, O Lord, should I worship you?”

These questions are agitating Arjun’s mind. How should he know Krishn-a yogi, how should he meditate on him, and how should he remember him?

18. “And, O Janardan, tell me again the power of your yog and your exalted magnificence, for I am not yet sated by the honey of your utterances.”

Krishn has stated briefly at the beginning of this chapter what Arjun wants to know again. Arjun begs him to elaborate the same again at greater length because his curiosity is not yet fully satisfied. Moreover, he also wishes to hear Krishn’s words just for the sake of listening to them. Such is the sweet charm of the speech of God and of sages. No wonder according to Goswami Tulsidas, one who is satiated with listening to the chronicle of Ram is bereft of sentiment.

Until the worshipper has access to the desired God, his thirst for the substance of immortality remains. If someone sits down on the way before the point of attainment with the feeling that he knows

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकनिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥१६॥
कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वं सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।
केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥१७॥
विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।
भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥१८॥

all, he has in fact known nothing. It is evident then that his progress is about to be obstructed. So it is the seeker's duty that he holds on to directions from the adored God and turns them into practice.

19. "The Lord (then) said, I shall now tell you of the power of my glories, for there is no end to my diverse manifestations."

After this he sets out to enumerate some outstanding instances of his numberless divine attributes.

20. "I am, O Gudakesh, the Self that dwells within all beings, as also their primeval beginning, middle, and end."

21. "I am Vishnu among the twelve sons of Aditi⁴, the sun among lights, the god Mareechi among winds, and the sovereign moon among planets."

Aditya and the other celestial beings referred to in the verse were taken as symbols of certain inner attitudes in the time of Krishn; they are all dwellers in the sphere of the heart.

22. "I am also the Sam among the Ved, Indr among gods, the mind among senses, and the consciousness in beings."

Among the Ved, Krishn is the Sam Ved, for it is he whose song begets the state of equanimity. He is the Lord Indr among gods, and the mind among senses for he is known only through restraint of the mind. He is also the power that gives beings their sense of awareness.

श्रीभगवानुवाचः हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
प्राधान्यतः कुरु श्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥१९॥
अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानमन्त एव च ॥२०॥
आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥२१॥
वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।
इंद्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतनाः ॥२२॥

4. Divinity in general. Name of the twelve divinities (suns) which are believed to shine only at the destruction of the universe.

23. “I am Shankar among Rudr,⁵ Kuber⁶ among demons and yaksh,⁷ fire among Vasu,⁸ and the Sumeru among lofty mountains.”

Krishn is Shankar among Rudr. Shankar-”shanka-ar”-may be understood as the condition in which there are no doubts and irresolutions. In fact, “Kuber,” “fire,” and “Sumeru” are all metaphors for the discipline of yog; they are all yogic terms.

24. “Be it known to you, Parth, that I am among priests the Chief Priest Brihaspati, Skand⁹ among martial chiefs, and the ocean among seas.”

Among priests, who keep watch over the intellect that is like a gateway to the human body, Krishn is Brihaspati, the divine teacher of gods themselves, and so it is he who generates the treasure of divinity. Among martial commanders he is Kartikeya, renunciation of action by which the destruction of animate and inanimate worlds, total dissolution, and the final attainment of God are effected.

25. “I am Bhrgu among the great saints (maharshi), OM among words, the yagya of intoned prayers (jap-yagya) among yagya, and the Himalaya among stationary objects.

Krishn is Bhrgu¹⁰ among great sages. He is also OM, symbol of the Supreme Spirit, among words. He is the jap-yagya among yagya. Yagya is the image of that special form of worship that

रुद्राणां शंकरश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥२३॥
पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥२४॥
महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥२५॥

5. The name of a group of gods, eleven in number, because they dwell within the ten senses and one mind, who are supposed to be inferior manifestations of Shiv or Shankar, the head of the group.
6. God of wealth
7. Demi-gods, described as attendants of Kuber.
8. A class of eight deities who constitute the human body.
9. Another name of Kartikeya.
10. One of the patriarchs created by the first Manu.

enables a worshipper to be united with God. In summary, therefore, it is remembrance of the Supreme Spirit and recitation of his name. When after having crossed the Stages of two kinds of speech, the audible and the muttered, the name reaches the stage of yagya, it is then recited by neither articulated speech nor from the throat; nor even in thought; it then infuses every breath. There is then only a surging ahead unceasingly with the vision of mind in God engraved on every breath. The rise and fall, ascent and descent, of yagya, and its different stages depend upon breath. It is something dynamic-a -matter of action. Among stationary objects, Krishn is the Himalaya, cool, even, and immovable like the one God himself. At the time of doom, it is said, Manu was joined with a peak of that mountain. The immutable, even, and tranquil God is never destroyed.

26. I am Ashwath (the Peepal) among trees, Narad among divine sages, Chitrarath¹¹ among Gandharv,¹² and the sage Kapil¹³ among men of attainment.”

Krishn is Ashwath, the holy peepal among trees. The world, which is not even sure of living until the symbolic tomorrow, is described as an inverted Peepal tree (fig tree) whose root-God-is above and whose boughs- nature-are spread below. This is not the ordinary Peepal tree that is commonly worshipped. And it is in this Sense that Krishn calls himself Peepal among trees. Narad (nade randhrah is Narad) has, on the other hand, such a sharp awareness that he can steadily hold on to the divine rhythm arising from breath. Among Gandharv Krishn is Chitrarath, or that unique state in which the object of contemplation begins to be directly perceptible to the worshipper. Kapil is bodily manifestation. Krishn is that form as well as both the state as well as the immersion in that form, and also the divine message that is received from it.

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।

गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथ सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥२६॥

11. The name of a king of the Gandharv : one of the sixteen sons of Kashyap by his wife Muni.
12. Demi-gods regarded as musicians to gods.
13. Name of the great sage who is believed to have founded the Sankhya school of philosophy.

27. “Know (also) that I am the nectar-born Uchchaishrav among horses, Airawat¹⁴ among pachyderms, and king among men.”

Every object in the world is perishable and the Self alone is indestructible. It is thus that Krishn is Uchchaishrav, Indr’s horse that is said to have been churned out of the nectar that came from the ocean. A horse is a symbol of regulated motion. Krishn is the motion of the mind in its quest for the reality of the Self. He is also king among men. A great soul is in fact a king, because he wants for nothing.

28. “I am Vajr¹⁵ among weapons, Kamdhenu¹⁶ among cows, Kamdev¹⁷ for procreation, and Vasuki,¹⁸ the king of snakes.

Krishn is the most formidable among weapons. Among cows he is Kamdhenu. Kamdhenu is not a cow which serves appetizing delicacies in place of milk. Among sages it was Vashisth who had Kamdhenu. Symbolically, the word “cow” stands for the senses. Restraint of the senses is an attribute of the seeker who has learnt to grasp the object of his worship. When he succeeds in moulding his senses in tune with God, his senses themselves become a “Kamdhenu” for him. With this he attains to the stage when the attainment of God is by no means beyond reach.

A seeker at this level finds nothing beyond his grasp. Krishn is also Kamdev for reproduction. However, the birth he effects is not the physical birth of a male or female child. Such procreation, by both animate and inanimate beings, goes on day and night. Even rats and ants reproduce themselves. But the generation of

उच्चैः श्रवसमश्नानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।

ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥२७॥

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।

प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥२८॥

14. Indr’s elephant.

15. Thunderbolt, the weapon of Indr, said to have been formed out of the bones of the sage Dadhichi.

16. A heavenly cow yielding all desires.

17. The cupid of the Hindu mythology, the son of Krishn and Rukmini.

18. Name of a celebrated serpent, king of snakes, said to be a son of Kashyap.

new life by Krishn is the generation of new situations-change from one circumstance to another-by which the inner propensities themselves are changed. Among snakes, Krishn is Vasuki, the celebrated king of snakes who is said to be a son of Kashyap.¹⁹

29. “I am Sheshnag²⁰ among the nag (snakes), the god Varun²¹ among beings of water, Aryama²² among ancestors, and Yamraj²³ among rulers.”

Krishn is the infinite or “Shesh nag.” Sheshnag is in fact no snake. There is a description of its form in the composition called Shreemad Bhagwat which is contemporaneous with the Geeta. According to it, Sheshnag is an embodiment of God’s vaishnavi (Vishnu) power which is stationed at a distance of thirty thousand yojan²⁴ from the earth and on whose head the earth rests lightly like a grain of mustard. This is, in truth, a picture of the force of gravity between objects which keeps the stars and planets in their respective orbits. This force winds itself around all of them and holds them like a snake. This is the infinite that holds the earth, too. Krishn says that he is that divine principle. He is also Varun, the king of amphibious beings, and Aryama among ancestors. Non-violence, truth, detachment, continence, and freedom from doubt are the five yam, moral restraints and observances. “Arah” represents the cutting off of the aberrations that appear in the way of their practice. Elimination of these evils brings to fulfillment the merits of action done in a previous life, which then provides liberation from worldly bondage. Among rulers Krishn is Yamraj, guardian of the restraints called yam.

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।

पितृणामर्थमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥२९॥

19. In the Indian mythology he bears a very important share in the work of creation and is therefore often called Prajapati.

20. Name of a celebrated serpent, said to have one thousand heads, and represented as forming the couch of Vishnu and supporting the entire world.

21. God of the ocean.

22. The king of Manes (departed ancestors).

23. The God of death, regarded as a son of the Sun-god.

24. A measure of distance equal to four kosas, or eight to nine miles.

30. “I am Prahlad²⁵ among daitya (demons), unit of time for reckoners, the lion (mrigendr) among beasts, and Garud²⁶ among birds.”

Krishn is Prahlad among demons. Prahlad (par + ahlad) is joy for others. Love itself is Prahlad. Attraction to God and the impatience to be one with him while one is yet dwelling with demoniacal instincts is a process that ultimately leads to perception. Krishn is the joyous love of this union. He is also time among those who are given to counting its units. This reckoning is really not of numbers and of divisions of time. Krishn is rather the progressive lengthening of time that is devoted to the contemplation of God. He is the time of incessant remembrance of God not only in the hours of wakefulness but also in sleep. Among beasts he is mrigendra, the lion or king of beasts, a symbol of the yogi who also roams about and rules in the forest of yog. Krishn is also Garud among feathered creatures. Garud is knowledge. When the awareness of God begins to grow, the worshipper's mind itself turns into a vehicle of the adored God. On the other hand, the same mind is like a “serpent” (sarp: an epithet of Garud) when it is infested with worldly desires, stinging and hurling Souls into the inferno of mortal births. Garud is Vishnu's vehicle. When it is blessed with knowledge, the mind also turns into a vehicle on which is borne the unmanifest Spirit that permeates every atom of the universe. So Krishn is the mind that holds and carries the worshipped God within itself.

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम् ।
मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥३०॥

25. According to the Padm-Puran, son of the demon Hiranya-kashipu who yet retained the ardent devotion to Vishnu which he had borne with him from a previous existence as a Brahmin.

26. Chief of feathered beings, represented as Vishnu's vehicle, having a white face, an aquiline nose, red wings, and golden body.

31. “I am the wind among powers that refine, Ram among armed warriors, the crocodile among fishes, and the sacred Bhagirathi Ganga²⁷ among rivers.”

Krishn is the invincible Ram among wielders of weapons. Ram denotes one who rejoices. Yogi rejoice in knowledge. The signals received from the God they worship are their sole pleasure. Ram symbolizes that direct perception and Krishn is that awareness. He is also the mighty crocodile among amphibian beings and the most sacred Ganga among rivers.

32. “I am, O Arjun , the beginning and end and also the middle of created beings, the mystic knowledge of Self among sciences, and the final arbiter among disputants.”

Among branches of learning Krishn is knowledge of the Supreme Spirit (as well as of the relation between the Supreme and the individual Soul). He is the knowledge that leads to the sovereignty of the Self. Dominated by maya, the vast majority are driven by passion, malice, time, action, disposition, and the three properties of nature. Krishn is the knowledge that takes one from this slavery of the material world into the state in which the Self is in supreme command. This is the knowledge that is called adhyatm. He is also the final verdict that resolves all disputes on the Supreme Spirit. What comes beyond this is, it is needles to say, beyond arbitration.

33. “I am the vowel akar²⁸ among the letters of the alphabet, dwandwa²⁹ among compounds, the eternal Mahakal amidst mutable time, and also the God who holds and sustains all.”

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभस्तामहम् ।

झषाणां मकरष्वास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥ 31 ॥

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चवाहमर्जुन ।

अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥ 32 ॥

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।

अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥ ३३ ॥

27. A name of the river Ganges.

28. The first of three sounds constituting the sacred syllable OM.

29. First of the four principal kinds of compounds in which two or more words are joined together which, if not compounded, will stand in the same case and be connected by a conjunction.

Besides being the first sound of the sacred OM, Krishn is also the imperishable, immutable time. Time is always changing, but he is that state-that time-which takes one to the eternal God. He is also the Omnipresent Spirit (Virat Swarup) who pervades and sustains all.

34. “I am the death that annihilates all, the root of the creations to be, and Keerti³⁰ among women-the embodiment of the feminine qualities of accomplishing action (keerti) vitality, speech, memory, awareness (medha), patience and forgiveness.”

As Yogeshwar Krishn will say in the sixteenth verse of Chapter 15, all beings (Purush) are of only two kinds, the perishable and the imperishable. All these bodies which generate other beings and die are mortal. Whether male or female, they are all Purush according to Krishn. The other Purush is the imperishable Cosmic Spirit who is perceived in the state when the mind has ceased to be. This is the reason why men and women equally can attain the supreme goal. The qualities of vitality, memory, awareness, and so on pointed out in the thirty-fourth verse are all feminine in principle. Does it mean that men have no need of these qualities? In truth, the animating principle of the heart's sphere is a feminine principle. The qualities enumerated in the verse need to be inculcated in all hearts, of men as much as of women.

35. “And I am the Sam Ved among scriptural hymn, the Gayatri³¹ among metrical compositions, the ascendant Agrahayan³² among months, and the spring among seasons.”

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्भवश्च भविष्यताम् ।

कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥३४॥

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।

मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥३५॥

30. Both as wife of one of the seven gods and symbol of feminine qualities, she is a manifestation of God's splendour.

31. A Vedic meter of twenty-four syllables and also name of a most sacred verse recited by pious Hindus at morning and evening devotion.

32. The lunar month of Agrahayan which corresponds approximately to November-December of the Gregorian calendar.

Among the sacred Vedic texts (Shruti)³³ that are fit to be sung, Krishn is the Sam Ved (Brihatsam), the song that produces evenness of mind. He is the spiritual awakening in these hymns. He, too, is Gayatri³⁴ among verses. The Gayatri, it is important to realize, is a metrical composition of self-denying prayer rather than a spell or charm, the recitation of which brings automatic salvation. After straying thrice, throwing himself at the mercy of the desired God, the sage Vishwamitr addressed him as the essence that permeates the earth, all the worlds, and the Self, and entreated him to confer wisdom on him and to inspire him so that he could know his reality. So, as it may be seen, Gayatri is a prayer. The worshipper is not able to resolve his doubts by his own intelligence; he does not know when he is right or in error. So Krishn is the Gayatri by which the hapless worshipper surrenders himself to God. This prayer is doubtlessly propitious, for by this the devotee seeks refuge in Krishn. Krishn is also Agrahayan among months-the ascendant season of joy. He is the state of felicity that this month resembles.

36. “I am the deceit of cheating gamblers, the glory of renowned men, the victory of conquerors, the determination of the resolved, and the virtue of the pious.”

The idea of gambling in the verse refers to the fundamental character of nature. Nature itself is a gambler and cheat. To forsake outward show and engage in the way of private adoration to escape from the contradictions of nature is an act of “deception.” But to call it “deception” is hardly appropriate, for such secretiveness is essential to the worshipper’s security. It is required that the worshipper, although in possession of a heart that is lit up with knowledge, appear outwardly ignorant like a benumbed Bharat-like one who is insane, blind, deaf and dumb. Although he sees, he should show as if he knows nothing; although he hears, it should

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।

जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्वतामहम् ॥३६॥

33. The part of the Ved which is known as Shruti: known by revelation.

34. The text of the prayer is given here for readers who may be interested in learning it :

ॐ भूभुवः स्वः तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यम् भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात् ।

appear that he has heard nothing. The canon of worship is that it should be private and secret. Only then can he win in the gamble of nature. Krishn is the victory of winners and the resolution of men of enterprise. This was also said in the forty-first verse of Chapter 2. The determination required for yog, its wisdom, and direction are all one and the same. Krishn is the dynamic mind, and also the magnificence and enlightenment of virtuous men.

37. “I am Vasudev among the descendants of Vrishni, Dhananjay among the Pandav, Vedvyas among sages, and Shukracharya³⁵ among poets.”

Krishn is Vasudev, or the one who is everywhere, among the Vrishni race. He is Dhananjay among the Pandav. Pandu (father of the Pandav) is a symbol of piety; he is the one in whom virtue is awakened. Realization of the Self is the only real and lasting wealth. Krishn is Dhananjay-the one who earns and stores the treasure of Self-knowledge. He is Vyas among sages. He is the sage who has the ability to express the idea of perfection. Among poets he is Ushn (Shukr) who has in the Ved the epithet kavya attributed to him, and who also has the wisdom to lead the Soul to God.

38. “And I am the oppression of tyrants, the wise conduct of those who aspire to succeed, silence among secrets, and also the knowledge of enlightened men.”

Krishn is all these,

39. “And, O Arjun, I am also the seed from which all beings have sprung up, because there is nothing animate or inanimate which is without my maya.”

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनंजयः ।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥३७॥
दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥३८॥
यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।
न तदिस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥३९॥

35. Name of teacher of the asur (demons) who were restored to life, if killed in battle, by the magical charm of his words.

There is nothing, no being, in the whole world who is devoid of Krishn because he pervades all. All beings resemble him and are close to him. He further adds:

40. “What I have told you, O Parantap, is only a brief abstract of my countless glories.”

So Arjun should regard whatever is endowed with magnificence, radiance, and might as having come forth from Krishn. This is what he is told now.

41. “Know that whatever is possessed of glory, beauty, and strength has arisen from my own splendour.”

Krishn concludes his revelation of the omnipresent thus:

42. “Or, instead of knowing anything more, O Arjun, just remember that I am here and I bear the whole world with just a fraction of my power.”

Krishn’s enumeration of his manifold glories by analogy does not imply that either Arjun or anyone of us should begin to adore the beings and objects he has cited for illustration. The exercise is rather aimed at enlightening men who are inclined to the worship of other gods and goddesses as well as of objects and creatures such as trees, rivers, planets, and serpents, that they have acquitted themselves well of their duties to all these divinities, objects, and beings by just adoring Krishn alone.



At the beginning of the chapter Krishn told Arjun that he would instruct him again in what he had also told him before because he was most dear to him. He was going to repeat the instruction, for a

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरं मया ॥४०॥
यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशसम्भवम् ॥४१॥
अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥४२॥

noble teacher's constant guidance is a necessity till the very moment of attainment. His origin, Krishn has said, is known to neither gods nor saints, because he is the primal source from which all of them are born. They do not know him because the universal state arising from attainment of the unmanifest God can be experienced only by those who have arrived at the supreme goal. He is a man of knowledge who knows Krishn, the birthless, eternal, and supreme God of the world, by direct perception.

All the qualities that constitute the treasure of divinity such as discernment, knowledge, freedom from delusion, restraint of the mind and senses, contentment, spiritual austerities, charity, and glory-are Krishn's creations. The seven immortal sages or rather the seven steps of yog and, preceding them, even the four inner faculties and in accordance with them the mind which is self-existent, self-creator: all these attributes of dedication and devotion to Krishn, and of which the whole world is progeny-are his creations. In other words, all worshipful inclinations are shaped by him. They are generated by the grace of the accomplished teacher rather than by themselves. The man who has a direct perception of Krishn's glories is doubtlessly worthy of merging into him with a sense of total identity.

They who know that Krishn is the root of all creation contemplate him with single-mindedness are dedicated to him with mind, intellect, and Soul, exchange thoughts of his excellence among themselves, and rejoice in him. He bestows upon the devotees, whoever think of him and adore him, that discipline of yog by learning which they at last attain to him. He does so by dwelling in their innermost being and dispelling the darkness of spiritual ignorance by the light of knowledge.

Arjun believes in the truth that Krishn is immaculate, eternal, radiant, without a beginning, and pervading every atom of the universe. This was witnessed to by great sages of earlier times and, even at Arjun's time, divine sages like Narad, Deval, Vyas, and Krishn himself say the same. It is also true that the essence of Krishn is known to neither gods nor demons. Only that devotee knows him to whom he chooses to make himself known. He alone is capable of instructing the worshipper in his manifold glories by

which he pervades and dwells in them. So Arjun requests him to enlighten him at length on the signs of his greatness. This is correct because the worshipper's impatient curiosity to listen to his adored God should remain until the very moment of fulfillment. Beyond this he cannot go because he knows not what lies within the heart of God.

Thereupon Krishn has summarized to Arjun eighty-one manifestations of his greatness. Whereas some of them illustrate the inner qualities that are developed by initiation into yog, others illumine the glories that are earned by social achievements and accomplishments. At the end, after all this, Krishn tells Arjun that instead of knowing about him in detail, he should just remember that whatever in the three worlds is endowed with magnificence and beauty has arisen from his own radiant power.

In this chapter Krishn has thus acquainted Arjun with his manifold glories at an intellectual level so that his faith withdraws itself from all distractions and is firmly centered on his destination. But even after listening to everything and comprehending them with much splitting of hair the essence of Krishn yet remains to be known, for the path leading to him is dynamic and can be trodden only by really embarking on action.

Thus concludes the Tenth Chapter, in the Upanishad of the Shrimad Bhagwad Geeta, on the Knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, the Discipline of Yog, and the Dialogue between Krishn and Arjun, entitled.

“Vibhooti Varnan.” or “An Account of Gods’s Glory”

Thus concludes Swami Adgadanand’s exposition of the Tenth Chapter of the Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta in “Yatharth Geeta.”

HARI OM TATSAT